

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 ADDIS 00223 141318Z
ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 H-01 /010 W
-----141339Z 042146 /54
R 140548Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2315

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 0223

NOFORN

FOR AF/E

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OREP (RICHARDSON, WILLIAM)
SUBJ: STAFFDEL RICHARDSON

FOLLOWING MEMCON RICHARDSON CONVERSATION WITH THE MINISTER OF
THE INTERIOR DEC 20, 1976

QUOTE:

PARTICIPANTS: MR. MOUHIN BAHDON, MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR
AND VICE PRESIDENT OF THE POPULAR AFRICAN LEAGUE FOR INDEPENDENCE
(LPAI); MR. WILLIAM B. RICHARDSON, SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS
COMMITTEE STAFF; MR. LOUIS F. JANOWSKI, POLITICAL OFFICER,
AMERICAN EMBASSY, ADDIS ABABA

DATE AND PLACE: DECEMBER 20, 1976, THE MINISTER'S OFFICE,
CITE MINISTERIAL, DJIBOUTI, TFAI

SUBJ: RICHARDSON CONVERSATION WITH THE MINISTER
OF THE INTERIOR

LANGUAGE: FRENCH

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 ADDIS 00223 141318Z

AFTER INTRODUCTORY REMARKS, MR. RICHARDSON RAISED THE RELATED
QUESTIONS OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TERRITORY'S INTERNAL SE-
CURITY FORCES AND THE POTENTIAL FOR SUBVERSION FROM DJIBOUTI'S
NEIGHBORS. THE MINISTER NOTED THAT THE FRENCH HAD PRIMARY
RESPONSIBILITY FOR SECURITY UNTIL INDEPENDENCE. HE STATED

THAT DJIBOUTI WAS ATTEMPTING TO GET ALONG WITH ITS NEIGHBORS AND DISCOUNTED THE DANGERS OF SUBVERSIVE ACTIONS AT THIS TIME. HE NOTED THE POPULATION OF THE TFAI WANTED INDEPENDENCE AND HOPED ETHIOPIA, SOMALIA AND THE TWO YEMENS WOULD RESPECT THIS DESIRE. IN HIS VIEW, SIX MONTHS TO ONE YEAR WOULD BE REQUIRED TO DEVELOP DJIBOUTI'S SECURITY FORCES TO THE NECESSARY LEVELS AND THAT NO FRENCH MILITARY PRESENCE OTHER THAN FOR TRAINING PURPOSES WOULD BE REQUIRED AFTER INDEPENDENCE. THIS WAS, HOWEVER, A DECISION THAT WOULD HAVE TO BE MADE BY THE FUTURE GOVERNMENT.

RICHARDSON THEN ASKED THE MINISTER, AS A POLITICIAN, AS TO THE LIKELY LEADERSHIP OF THE FUTURE REPUBLIC. AFTER THE CASUAL POLITICAL CAVEATS, BAHDON INDICATED THAT HASSAN GOULED WAS HIS CHOICE, AND THAT AHMED DINI HAD AN EXCELLENT CHANCE OF BECOMING PRIME MINISTER. HE STATED THAT THE LPAI WAS A DEMOCRATIC AND ALL-ENCOMPASSING POLITICAL PARTY WHOSE OBJECTIVES WERE INDEPENDENCE AND UNITING ALL FACTIONS WITHIN THE TERRITORY. THE LPAI WOULD PARTICIPATE IN THE FUTURE GOVERNMENT, IT WAS NOT PRO-SOMALI, AND IT OPPOSED FOREIGN ANNEXATION.

RICHARDSON ASKED WHAT THE ROLE OF THE USG SHOULD BE IN THE PRE- AND POST-INDEPENDENCE PERIODS. THE MINISTER NOTED THAT IN THE PRE-INDEPENDENCE PERIOD, MATTERS WERE CONTROLLED BY FRANCE. THE MOST HELPFUL US ROLE WAS TO SUPPORT FRANCE AND RESTRAIN ETHIOPIA. THERE WAS A NEED FOR FOREIGN ASSISTANCE AFTER INDEPENDENCE, BUT THAT WAS A MATTER TO BE DETERMINED BY THE FUTURE GOVERNMENT. THE US SHOULD, OF COURSE, ESTABLISH AN EMBASSY AFTER INDEPENDENCE, BUT IT WAS PREMATURE TO DISCUSS THE ESTABLISH-
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 ADDIS 00223 141318Z

MENT OF FORMAL RELATIONS. A US PRESENCE IN THE TERRITORY PRIOR TO INDEPENDENCE WAS PROBABLY NOT WISE.

MR. RICHARDSON THEN ASKED ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE LPAI AND THE FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF THE SOMALI COAST. RICHARDSON NOTED THE REPORTS OF AN FLCS PLOT AGAINST THE LIFE OF HASSAN GOULED AND ASKED, IN VIEW OF THE CLOSE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE LPAI AND THE FLCS HOW THIS COULD BE POSSIBLE? THE MINISTER NOTED THAT THE FLCS AND LPAI ACTED AS ONE TEAM AND WOULD HAVE A JOINT DELEGATION IN PARIS. HE STATED THAT IF THESE REPORTS WERE TRUE AND IF MEMBERS OF THE FLCS DID, IN FACT, ATTEMPT TO KILL HASSAN GOULED, THAT THIS WAS THE WORK OF AN OUTSIDE POWER. HE LEFT THE CLEAR IMPRESSION THAT THE POWER IN QUESTION WAS THE SOVIET UNION.

RICHARDSON THEN ASKED THE MINISTER'S VIEWS ON OTHER PARTIES AND POLITICAL GROUPINGS. THE MINISTER NOTED THE LPAI HAD ASKED THE MOVEMENT FOR THE LIBERATION OF DJIBOUTI (MLD) TO COME INTO THE TERRITORY AND PARTICIPATE IN THE POLITICAL PROCESS. ALI AREF

HAD NO POLITICAL FUTURE. THE POPULAR LIBERATION MOVEMENT (MPL) WAS COMPOSED OF A SMALL NUMBER OF MAOIST YOUNG AFARS. IT HAD BEEN RECEIVING ASSISTANCE FROM ETHIOPIA AS HAD THE NATIONAL UNION FOR INDEPENDENCE (UNI). THE MINISTER NOTED THAT IT HAD BEEN SAID THAT THIS ASSISTANCE IN FACT CAME FROM THE U.S.

ASKED TO CLARIFY HIS COMMENT, THE MINISTER STATED THAT THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE UNI (SINCE ELECTED PRESIDENT) HAD STATED IN A SPEECH IN HIS DISTRICT THAT THE UNI HAD BEEN RECEIVING ASSISTANCE FROM BOTH ETHIOPIA AND THE US. A GOOD NUMBER OF THE LOCAL POPULATION BELIEVED THIS TO BE TRUE. THIS WAS CAUSING PROBLEMS FOR THE US IN DJIBOUTI. THE UNI HAD RECEIVED APPROXIMATELY \$3 MILLION TO DATE, AND THE EPMG DID NOT HAVE THAT KIND OF MONEY. THUS, IT WAS LOGICAL TO ASSUME THAT FUNDS WERE BEING PROVIDED BY THE USG.

THE REPORTING OFFICER REVIEWED THE STATUS OF US-ETHIOPIAN REL-
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 ADDIS 00223 141318Z

TIONS SINCE THE REVOLUTION, NOTING THAT THE EPMG WAS FOLLOWING AN INDEPENDENT POLICY VIS-A-VIS DJIBOUTI. AS THE OFFICER PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE FOR COVERING DJIBOUTI FROM ADDIS, HE COULD STATE THAT NO US ASSISTANCE WAS BEING FUNNELLED THROUGH THE EPMG OR ANY OTHER INTERMEDIARY FOR THE UNI OR MPL. ANY SUCH ACTIONS WOULD HAVE IMPORTANT CONSEQUENCES ON US RELATIONS WITH FRANCE. THE USG GENERALLY SUPPORTED THE GOF'S EFFORTS IN THE TERRITORY, AND IT WAS HIGHLY UNLIKELY THAT THE USG WOULD ENDANGER ITS LONG-STANDING RELATIONS WITH FRANCE TO SUPPORT THE PRESENT SOCIALIST REGIME IN ETHIOPIA ON SUCH A DUBIOUS ISSUE.

ASKED ABOUT SOMALI ASSISTANCE TO THE LPAI, THE MINISTER NOTED THAT SUCH ASSISTANCE WAS LIMITED TO THE TRAINING OF CADRE. THE EPMG'S PROBLEM WAS THAT IT SUPPORTED THE POLICIES OF ONE MAN, ALI AREF, WHO HAD NO POLITICAL FUTURE IN THE TERRITORY.

THE LPAI WAS NEITHER SOCIALIST, COMMUNIST, OR PRO-SOMALI. DJIBOUTI DESIRED GOOD RELATIONS WITH ALL AND WOULD FOLLOW A POLICY OF NEUTRALITY. THE LPAI HAD EXTENDED THE HAND OF FRIENDSHIP TO ETHIOPIA. HE HAD SEEN BERHANU DINKA (HEAD OF AFRICAN DIVISION, EPMG MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS) LAST JUNE AND PROPOSED GOOD RELATIONS. DESPITE THIS, THERE HAD BEEN NO REPLY FROM THE EPMG. THE EPMG HAD SENT MPL AND UNI DELEGATIONS TO THE UN AND SUPPORTED BOTH GROUPS FINANCIALLY. HASSAN GOULED WAS NEITHER COMMUNIST, SOCIALIST, OR PRO-USSR, BUT RATHER A WISE AND ELDERLY STATESMAN AND A FORMER MEMBER OF THE FRENCH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. DJIBOUTI NEEDED UNITY, AND THE LPAI WAS PREPARED TO ACCEPT ALL GROUPS WHO WISHED TO UNITE WITH THEM.

ASKED ABOUT HIS POLITICAL PLANS, THE MINISTER INDICATED THAT

HE DID NOT EXPECT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE FUTURE GOVERNMENT,
BUT RATHER EXPECTED TO TAKE AN AMBASSADORIAL POST.

REPORTING OFFICER'S COMMENTS:

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 05 ADDIS 00223 141318Z

THE MINISTER DID NOT APPEAR TO UNDERSTAND THE DEVELOPMENT
OF US-ETHIOPIAN RELATIONS SINCE THE REVOLUTION AND APPEARED
DISTRUSTFUL OF THE US, THE USSR AND FRANCE.

CLASSIFIED BY HERBERT S. MALIN
GDS-DECLASSIFIED 12/31/83

POL:LFJANOWSKI:FJB:EL
12/28/76

UNQUOTE
TIENKEN

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 14-Jan-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977ADDIS00223
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770014-0992
Format: TEL
From: ADDIS ABABA
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770153/aaaabtyz.tel
Line Count: 193
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 69fe04da-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: NOFORN
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: NOFORN
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3601714
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: STAFFDEL RICHARDSON FOLLOWING MEMCON RICHARDSON CONVERSATION WITH THE MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR DEC 20, 1976
TAGS: OREP, (RICHARDSON, WILLIAM)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/69fe04da-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009